GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:29
ANSWERED ON:30.11.2015
Bilateral Trade Agreements
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Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

a) whether India has signed bilateral trade agreements with various countries recently;

b) if so, the details and the salient features of these agreements;

c) the details of bilateral agreements with countries which were signed during the last three years which did not materialize and the reasons therefor; and

d) the measures taken by the Government to strengthen the bilateral trade relations with other countries?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

(a)&(b) India has not entered into any new Free Trade Agreement (FTA) or Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) during the last one year. However, India expanded the scope of the India-ASEAN Trade in Goods (TIG) Agreement on 09.09.2014 to cover both Services and Investment with its date of implementation as 01.07.2015.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) There are appropriate institutional mechanisms such as Strategic Commercial Dialogue, Trade Policy Forum, Bilateral High Level Group, Annual Ministerial Dialogue etc established with partner countries to discuss and strengthen bilateral trade relations. Moreover, region specific initiatives such as "Focus LAC" for the Latin American region are also important in strengthening trade relation between partners in the region. With a view for closer trade integration, the government has also negotiated 11 free trade agreement (FTAs), 6 preferential trade agreements (PTAs) and is negotiating 19 trade agreements as given in the Annexure to this question.
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Annexure
A. Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) already in force:

SN Name of the Agreement Date of Signing of the Agreement Date of Implementation of the Agreement
1 India - Sri Lanka FTA 28th December. 1998 1st March, 2000
2 Agreement on SAFTA
(India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives and Afghanistan) 4th January, 2004 1st January, 2006
(Tariff concessions implemented from 1st July, 2006)

3 Revised Agreement of Cooperation between Government of India and Nepal to control unauthorized trade 27th October, 2009 27th October, 2009
4 India - Bhutan Agreement on Trade Commerce and Transit 17th January, 1972 Renewed periodically, with mutually agreed modifications.
5 India - Thailand FTA - Early Harvest Scheme (EHS) 9th October, 2003. 1st September, 2004
6 India - Singapore CECA 29th June, 2005 1st August, 2005
7 India - ASEAN- CECA - Trade in Goods Agreement (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) 13th August, 2009 â€¢ 1st January 2010 in respect of India and Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand.
â€¢ 1st June 2010 in respect of India and Vietnam.
â€¢ 1st September 2010 in respect of India and Myanmar.
â€¢ 1st October 2010 in respect of India and Indonesia.
â€¢ 1st November 2010 in respect of India and Brunei.
â€¢ 24 January 2011 in respect of India and Laos.
â€¢ 1st June 2011 in respect of India and the Philippines.
â€¢ 1st August, 2011 in respect of India and Cambodia.
8 India - South Korea CEPA 7th August 2009 1st January, 2010
9 India - Japan CEPA 16th February, 2011 1st August, 2011
10 India - Malaysia CECA 18th February, 2011 1st July, 2011
11 India-ASEAN Services and Investment Agreement
(Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) 9th September, 2014 1st July, 2015

B. Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) already in force:

S. No. Name of the Agreement Date of Signing of the Agreement Date of Implementation of the Agreement
1 Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA)
(Bangladesh, China, India, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka) July, 1975
(revised on 2nd November, 2005 1st Nov,1976

2 Global System of Trade Preferences
(GSTP)
(Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Democratic People"s Republic of Korea, Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Romania, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yugoslavia, Zimbabwe) 13th April, 1988 19th April,1989

3 SAARC Preferential Trading Agreement (SAPTA) 11 April, 1993 7 December,1995
4 India - Afghanistan 6th March, 2003 13th May,2003
5 India - MERCOSUR 25th January, 2004 1st June, 2009

6 India - Chile 8th March, 2006 11th September, 2007

C. FTAs/PTAs under Negotiation:

S. No. Name of the Agreement Status
1 India - EU BTIA
(Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom) Negotiations launched on 28th June 2007 in the areas of Goods, Services, Investment, Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary Measures, Technical Barriers to Trade, Trade Facilitation and Customs Cooperation, Competition, IPR & GIs. etc

Fifteen rounds of negotiations and a number of inter-sessional and Chief Negotiator level meetings have been held till date. A Ministerial review meeting between Hon'ble Commerce & Industry Minister and EU's Trade Commissioner was held on 15th April, 2013 at Brussels.

After a period of lull, both sides began re-engagement from October, 2014 onwards. The negotiations are still ongoing and an impact assessment can be made only they are concluded.
2 India − Sri Lanka CEPA FTA in goods implemented from March 2000.

A JSG was set up in April, 2003 to widen the ambit of ISLFTA to go beyond Trade in Goods to include Services and to facilitate greater investment flows between the two countries. Based on the recommendation and conclusion of the JSG, negotiations for a CEPA were started in February, 2005. No discussion is currently taking place on India-Sri Lanka CEPA.
3 India - Thailand CECA Early Harvest Scheme on 82 items implemented. So far 29th rounds of India-Thailand Trade Negotiation committee (ITTNC) meetings have been held. The 29th round was held in Bangkok in June 2015.
4 India - Mauritius CECPA Ten rounds of negotiations on India-Mauritius CECPA have been held between the two sides so far. The last round of negotiation was held between India and Mauritius on 23−24 October, 2006. However, CECPA negotiations have been formally put on hold.
5 India EFTA TEPA (Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein and Switzerland) The India-EFTA TEPA (Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement) was launched in January 2008 (then known as BTIA). The first round was held in New Delhi during 6-8 October, 2008. The Chapters covered are Trade in Goods, Services, Investment,, Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary Measures (SPS), Technical Barriers to Trade(TBT), Trade Facilitation and Customs Cooperation, Competition, Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), Government Procurement (GP), Dispute Settlement(DS), Trade Defence(TD), Rules of origin(ROO), Sustainable Development (SD) and Legal & Horizontal etc. 13 rounds of negotiations have been held with the 13th and final round being held on 25-29th November, 2013. Legal vetting has been completed in most of the texts with only some residual work remaining. There are few pending issues on both sides such as TRIPS Plus and Data Adequacy/Data Security status.
6 India - New Zealand FTA/CECA Ten Rounds of negotiation of CECA have been held so far. The 10th Round was held in New Delhi on 17-18 February, 2015.
7 India − Israel FTA Eight rounds of negotiations on India-Israel FTA have been held so far. The Eighth round was held in Israel from 24-26 November, 2013.
8 India - Singapore CECA Second review of India-Singapore CECA was launched in May, 2010. During the visit of Minister of Commerce & Industry on 15-16 May, 2013 to Singapore, it was decided to constitute a Joint Working Group of Reserve Bank of India and Monetary Authority of Singapore to resolve the issue of Asset Maintenance Requirements in a time bound manner to conclude the 2nd Review on the issue of Employee Provident Fund.
9 India - SACU PTA (South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Namibia) Five rounds of negotiations have been held so far. 1st Round of negotiation was held in Pretoria on October 5-6th, 2007 and the 5th round of negotiations held in October 2010 in New Delhi. During the 9th Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) meeting held at Durban on 19th March, 2015 under the co-chairmanship of Honorable Minister of External Affair and South Africa's Foreign Minister, while discussing pending negotiations on finalization of

INDIA-SACU PTA, the Indian side requested the South African side for assistance in holding the 6th round of negotiations.
10 India - Mercosur PTA
(Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) The two issues currently under discussion on the India-Mercosur PTA are the expansion in coverage and inclusion of Venezuela in the PTA.
11 India − Chile PTA With the objective of gaining optimal benefits and boosting bilateral trade between the two countries, the expansion of India-Chile PTA is being processed for Cabinet approval.
12 BIMSTEC CECA
(Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan and Nepal) 20 meetings of the Trade Negotiation Committee (TNC) have taken place. The 20th Meeting of BIMSTEC Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) was held during 07-09, September 2015 in Khon Kaen, Thailand.
13 India - Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Framework Agreement
(Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar and United Arab Emirates) Two rounds of negotiations have been held so far in 2006 and 2008. The second round was held in September 9-10, 2008. No round could take place in the last 6 years since GCC has deferred its negotiations with all countries and economic groups and is currently reviewing its negotiations with all countries and economic groups.
14 India − Canada FTA Eight rounds of negotiation on India-Canada CEPA have been held so far. The Eighth round was held in Ottawa, Canada from 24th to 26th June, 2013.
15 India - Indonesia Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) Commencement of negotiation on Indonesia - India CECA was announced on 25th January 2011 during the visit of Indonesian President to New Delhi. Negotiations are yet to commence. The first meeting pre-negotiation and Biennial Trade and Investment Forum (BTIF) took place in Jakarta on October 3-4, 2011. Negotiation has been kept in abeyance watching progress of RCEP.
16 India - Australia Nine rounds of negotiations have been held so far. The ninth round of negotiations was held on 21-23 September 2015, in New Delhi, India.
17. India-Malaysia CECA
(1st Review) 1st meeting of the India-Malaysia Joint Committee meeting to review implementation of the Agreement was held on 8th December, 2014.
18 Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement among ASEAN + 6 FTA Partners (Australia, China, India, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand) Based on the Declaration of the Leaders during the ASEAN Summit in November, 2012, negotiations for a comprehensive economic partnership between the 10 ASEAN member states and its 6 FTA partners commenced in May, 2013. Ten rounds of negotiations have been held so far. The 10th round was held from 8-16 October, 2015 in Busan, Korea. The negotiations cover a number of areas like trade in goods, services, investment, intellectual property, economic & technical cooperation, competition and legal & institutional issues.
19 India-ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam)
(1st Review) The ASEAN Secretariat has agreed to the 1st review of India-ASEAN trade in Goods Agreement in the coming months. The dates would be finalized as per mutual consultations.

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